

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Proposition 50, Chapter 8 IRWM Implementation Step 1

PIN: 5976
APPLICANT NAME: Mojave water agency
PROJECT TITLE: Mojave Water Agency Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
FUNDS REQUESTED: \$50,000,000
COST MATCH: \$31,400,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$81,400,000

DESCRIPTION: The suite of ten projects as determined by the regional Technical Advisory Comm. (TAC), Stakeholders, includes supply reliability, groundwater recharge and storage, conservation and non native plant removal. The projects selected by the TAC represent the highest priority elements of the IRWMP. After many years of sustained regional groundwater overdraft, these integrated and multiple benefit projects will provide significant improvement of local and regional water supply reliability and management of the regions water resources. The IRWMP was configured to be a comprehensive plan encompassing aspects of supply reliability and groundwater management. The IRWMP meets legislative mandates for UWMP and GWMP.

Question: Consistency with Minimum IRWM Standards - This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated that the IRWM Plan meets the minimum standards.

Pass

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Adopted IRWM Plan and Proof of Formal Adoption. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The applicant provides proof of adoption of the IRWMP in Attachment 3. Resolution No. 798-05 adopts IRWMP by the applicant on 2/24/05. In addition, every entity on the TAC agreed to function as the public advisory body to the applicant for IRWMP development and submitted acknowledgment and support documents for IRWMP ratification. Resolution 797-05 adopts the Program EIR (PEIR) for the IRWMP on February 24, 2005.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Description of Region. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The applicant does a good job in addressing all criteria pertaining to the description of the region. The applicant (1) directs readers to specific locations, page numbers, etc. where each criterion is addressed, and (2) addresses criteria thoroughly in a logical and well thought-out manner.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Objectives. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The applicant does a good job in addressing all criteria pertaining to the IRWMP objectives. The applicant (1) directs readers to specific locations, page numbers, etc. where each criterion is addressed, and (2) addresses criteria thoroughly. Table 7-1 in IRWMP is an overview of Demand Management Measures that highlights water management conflicts/issues/challenges in the region.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Water Management Strategies and Integration. Weighting factor is 1. 4

Applicant discusses Water Management Strategies (WMS) and Integration in Attachment 5.D., 5.E, and in more detail in Chapters 9 & 10 of the IRWMP. The primary WMS to be employed are water supply reliability, groundwater management, water quality protection and improvement, conjunctive use of imported water, areas of potential storm retention, and land use planning. Most strategies involve recharge (p.10-2), but no discussion of recreation and public access. No discussion of why a strategy was not used.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Priorities and Schedule. Weighting factor is 1. 5

Applicant discusses priorities and schedule in Attachment 5.F and in more detail in Chapters 9 & 10 of the IRWMP. Applicant does a good job in addressing the criterion for this question. Priorities discuss key water management issues and issues common to all stakeholders. Short-term and long-term priorities are discussed and shown in Tables 9-9, and 9-42. High priority projects (including projects for which grant funding is being sought) will be implemented within the next four years. Moderate priority projects and actions will be implemented in the next five to ten years. Lower priority projects will be implemented in the next 10 to 20 years. Monitoring, improving basin understanding and public participation are on-going efforts which extend over the entire span of the Plan. Chapter 10 addresses how IRWMP will use a responsive decision making process, assess projects, and project sequencing.

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Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Implementation. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The applicant discusses institutional structure of implementation in Chapters 9 & 10 of IRWMP. IRWMP forecasts 10 projects broken into three priorities. Applicant appears committed to the implementation of these projects since (1) IRWMP was adopted already, (2) applicant providing 39% match monies, (3) PEIR was adopted in February 2005, (4) individual project environmental review has begun on all priority 1 projects (total of 7), and (5) feasibility studies & preliminary project tasks have already been initiated. Att. 8 provides project schedule. For most of these projects scope of work is related to water supply, i.e. groundwater recharge projects - these projects are intended to alleviate some of the regional needs to import water supplies in the future and partially to restore groundwater levels.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Impacts and Regional Benefits. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant evaluates impacts and benefits using the regional model (Chapter 9) and within the PEIR. Applicant discusses the advantages of regional vs. local efforts, interregional benefits & impacts, and benefits to DAC's expanded upon in Attachment 10. The proposal would have scored higher for these criteria if the applicant elaborated in more details on any potential negative impacts of implementation and discussed the overlapping benefits of implementing all 10 projects.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Technical Analysis and Plan Performance. Weighting factor is 1.

5

Technical analyses are discussed in Chapter 9. Reference is made in IRWMP to needing more data, such as well data (4-21). Applicant states that additional monitoring wells would help evaluate differences in water quality between the two aquifers, the Floodplain Aquifer and the Regional Aquifer. Plan performance and monitoring systems are addressed in Chapter 10.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Data Management. Weighting factor is 1.

5

Applicant discusses data management in Chapter 10 of the IRWMP. The USGS, in cooperation with the applicant, maintains a database to store river flow, water quality, and water level data that will be significantly expanded through the implementation of the IRWMP. The applicant's relational database (GIS) is configured to support the needs of other regulatory and planning agencies that include DWR and the Regional Water Board. Applicant expresses interests and willingness to make compiled data available to all interested stakeholders.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Financing. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The applicant presents financing for the implementation of projects in Chapter 10. Applicant relies on an array of financing mechanisms, such as bonds, grants, or low interests loans. Applicant discusses in detail of potential funding sources through cost-share agreements between agencies, cooperative funding agreements, and other cost savings through conservation and water reuse. However, no specific or guaranteed funding source has been secured to date. The applicant has adopted four management actions (plan) related to IRWMP financing to secure future implementation financing. Financing for operation and maintenance of projects is addressed in Chapter 10.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Relation to Local Planning & Sustainability. Weighting factor is 1.

5

Applicant provides a discussion of local planning and sustainability in Attachment 5.L, 5.M, and Chapter 10. The IRWMP incorporates all required elements of an IRWMP, groundwater management plan and urban water management plan. The applicant has demonstrated coordination at all local levels, that projects relate to local planning agencies and that the IRWMP relates to IRWM water management strategies.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Stakeholder Involvement & Coordination. Weighting factor is 1.

5

Applicant discusses stakeholder involvement & coordination in Chapter 7,8,10 and in Attachment 5.N and 5.O. The applicant has developed and implements the IRWMP with comprehensive involvement of stakeholders through a collaborative regional process. In this section, the applicant does not discuss any specific EJ concerns or DAC involvement in the planning process; however, this information is adequately covered as part of the attachment 10.

Question: Funding Match. This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated the ability to meet the minimum funding match or has requested a waiver or reduction in the funding match.

Pass

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Question: Description of Proposal. Weighting factor is 3.

12

The application contains descriptions (Attachment 6) of the 10 projects proposed to be implemented. All of these projects fall within one or more of the eligible water management elements described in Section III. C in the guidelines. Applicant elaborates on the projects goals and objectives and how they are consistent with the IRWMP. The proposed projects are all under environmental review as described in Attachment 13 and the PEIR. The applicant supports the scientific basis of each project with a number of on-going or previous pilot tests and studies within the region. In addition, the applicant makes connections to ensure consistency with proposed projects and to the RWQCB 9's WMI plan and policy as described in Attachment 12. Specific metrics have not been developed or expressed to ensure measurable water quality benefits from implementation of the IRWMP.

Question: Project Prioritization. Weighting factor is 2.

8

The applicant prioritizes projects within the proposal based on reviews from Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and applicant's Board of Directors. Priority projects focuses on groundwater recharge, water conservation, water supply, and eradication of non-native plant species. Details found in Attachment 6. Applicant's score could have been improved in this section by discussing in more details as to how the TAC evaluated project priorities and what mechanisms were used to come up with their 3 tier project priority system.

Question: Cost Estimate. Weighting factor is 1.

5

Cost estimate and budget details are provided in Attachment 7. The proposed project costs appear to be reasonable and costs are adequately broken out between design/construction/administration/land costs/match funds/etc. for each of the 10 proposed projects. The Applicant provides details of match funds and their source per project. Total matching funds for suite of projects is ~39%.

Question: Schedule. Weighting factor is 1.

5

A schedule is shown in Attachment 8. The applicant provides a comprehensive, very detailed schedule for the implementation of their 10 projects in a reasonable time frame for such projects. For a couple of projects, environmental review process has begun with most design phases to begin in Jan. 2006. The proposal includes milestones as part of the schedule such as environmental review period, design phase, bidding, and construction start date. Schedule does not include projects for which funding is not requested.

Question: Need. Weighting factor is 2.

8

Applicant describes the need for the proposal in Attachment 9. The applicant discusses local hydrology and overdraft, two adjudications ordering that the local water supplies must be managed region wide to address needs, key water management issues, current water management systems and the expected long-term needs and how this proposal will meet those needs. Negative impacts that would result from not implementing the projects are discussed. Applicant could have provided more detail on the interactions of regional economic, environmental, and fiscal impact conditions relative to the need to the proposal.

Question: Disadvantaged Communities. Weighting factor is 2.

10

Attachment 10 discusses the benefits to DAC through the implementation of the proposal. Applicant describes direct benefits to DAC in region through specific projects such as Oro Grande Wash, Upper Mojave River Well Field, Mean/Ames Valley, and region wide conservation program. The applicant discusses communities with a MHI less than 80% and describes method in determining MHI calculations. In addition, applicant gives a population figure for these communities versus the entire regional population and provides disadvantaged community ratio.

Question: Program Preferences. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant provides program preferences in Attachment 11. The proposal addresses 3 of 6 program preferences in Section II.E of the guidelines. The applicant demonstrates that multiple proposed projects have an integrated approach with multiple benefits/program preferences. The applicant does not applicable program preferences related to safe drinking water and water quality projects that serve disadvantaged communities (covered in Attachment 10), or the need to eliminate or significantly reduce pollution in impaired waters and sensitive habit areas, and the need to contribute expeditiously and measurably to the long-term attainment and maintenance of water quality standards.

TOTAL SCORE: 110